

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS THAT DON'T SHOW UP: Starting at Item X
X COMMERCIAL/NON-COMMERCIAL

While I definitely agree with the rules regarding LPFMs being licensed only to non-profit organizations, I disagree with the non-commercial requirement.

My rationale is based on several factors. All factors involve getting LPFM out of the box and taking it's proper role in service to it's community. I have indeed seen truly local non-commercial full power stations struggle to bring in enough income to properly service it's community. Without Government dollars helping, the job is much more difficult.

It is factual to say LPFM covers a much smaller locale than the full power station. This means fewer potential listeners in the service area. Fewer listeners mean fewer listener generated donations. With fewer listeners comes fewer businesses on which underwriting becomes possible. Fewer Underwriters mean fewer dollars for the operation. With fewer listeners comes fewer non-profit organizations who might contribute to the station. The result is less, less and less. Less, Less and Less means the level of service and the chance of viability is much, much, much less than it's potential.

A non-profit organization with an LPFM license might be located in a small community where business doors are shutting. Each year a few more businesses shut down. This is one of the biggest concerns for rural areas. It has caused the death of many communities and continues to be a major threat to rural life in America. Likewise, in urban areas, a LPFM operator may be service an area in need of revitalization. The area is trying to pull itself up by its boot strings. The LPFM creates the sense of community but cannot provide a benefit to the much needed business community because of its non-commercial status.

Because of the limited coverage of LPFM, it's likelihood to be located in rural areas or in urban areas where revitalization is needed, I suggest the FCC permit those LPFM operators to choose

either a commercial or non-commercial status for their station. By allowing this choice, you open the door to allowing the LPFM to be better funded, so it can better serve its community. While some might argue LPFMs will put profit over service, I contend the general nature of the many LPFM operators I know is toward public service versus making money.

The FCC might allow a more enhanced form of underwriting equal to what non-profit organizations utilize in funding print publications they distribute. This frequently offers comparative statements and price and item or discount for readers.

I am sure some will contend that allowing for commercial operation will create a monster with money-hungry applicants trying to squeeze out sincere LPFMers. I truly don't understand the concern. I've lived in the real world of radio. I've sold radio on the street, dealing with business owners. I know what LPFM can expect. It will be only the small Mom and Pop businesses that will consider LPFM aside from business owners who are 'fans' of the station. Thus, those businesses who cannot afford full power station rates and simply cannot afford more than a 4 column inch ad in the weekly newspaper will be the LPFM supporter. There simply isn't enough money there to warrant paranoia.

Through my connections in the business, including Low Power FM, I hear the many ideas of how LPFM should be permitted to be commercial and how this must be restricted or it will become a monster that will destroy LPFM. I hear the rule should be only to accept advertising from the fringe coverage of the LPFM station. What about Dixon, New Mexico where the locals must shop 10 to 20 miles away. Selling to the fringe coverage area for KLDK is ONE retail business. This idea is flawed. Plainly put, a business that cannot hear the LPFM on their radio will only buy IF they know an important portion of their business comes from the LPFM's coverage area. So, such a rule is not needed.

Next folks in the business tell me advertising should be limited. I agree. I think a fair limit is 5 minutes per hour on average per any calendar week. To calculate, the full week's advertising

should not exceed 840 minutes. The formula I am proposing is “up to 5 minutes per broadcast hour, averaged over a 7 day period”. For example, a station operating 84 hours a week, 12 hours a day, may utilize a maximum of 84 times 5 minutes or 420 minutes per week for advertising/underwriting.

Others in the business tell me a percentage of revenue must come from fundraising and listener contributions. If they choose to play fundraiser in lieu of radio station operator, fine. Whatever works for the individual station and market is fine. Some want to spend their limited time on truly serving the public, including the struggling small business. Why put up such a restriction that takes time away from serving the public. The efforts I’d put in to setting up a concert, manning a booth at a community event or running a bake sale could better be used reflecting life in the community via the radio station.

I see LPFM as a nice car. The tires are new. The engine is in beautiful shape. Everything is in top notch condition. It just won’t go. There’s no gasoline in the engine. The level of service an LPFM can offer is directly related to the nice car and how much gasoline can be put in the tank. Give it a gallon and it takes you so far in relation to service to the community. Fill up the tank and the level of service expands in to the true potential of the station. An isolated few LPFMers have been able to reach their potential without airing ‘commercials’ but this figure might be 1 in 50. Most limp along with a shoestring budget and great plans for the future. If advertising is grossly limited to a tiny amount every hour or restricted to just the coverage area, it is like putting a gallon of gas in the car. It only takes you so far toward your goal.

XI LPFM TRANSMITTERS

I have taken note of the requirement of LPFM stations to have “Type Certified” transmitters, over and above the requirements of other licensed broadcasters. It makes me ponder if the transmitter manufacturers who make 100,000 watt, 50,000 watt and 250 watt and 100 watt transmitters have a problem

building a reliable transmitter at lower power levels. I would think the higher power levels would be of greatest concern in lieu of the lowest power levels. I can understand the requirement for unattended operation, such as the translator. Since a person is not available to oversee the transmitter, it is essential such transmitters are certified by a third party and be constructed for long-term unattended operation, assuring the FCC that the facility will remain compliant with FCC Rules and Regulations while unattended. Since LPFMs run in much the same way as a full power station, such a requirement is not needed. Will you, the FCC, consider leveling the playing field and not singling out LPFM for such an unnecessary financial and legal requirement? In your initial summary, you talked about the minimal costs at which a LPFM could be constructed. Why then must LPFMers be required to spend more for the 'certified' when the 'accepted' is already in use without problems?

XII THIRD CHANNEL ADJACENTS

In the beginning of Low Power FM, you, the FCC okayed Third Channel Adjacents and rightfully so. Some in the radio business chose to show a 'lack of candor' by presenting information that was not forthcoming in regard to interference that would hinder full power stations. As I am sure you saw this attempt to block LPFM for what it was, you acted accordingly at the direction of Congress to find the claim unsubstantiated. I urge the FCC to ask Congress to open Third Adjacents to LPFM. Engineers I have spoken with attest that with responsible engineering no interference shall occur. Some of these engineers speak of how the claim was bogus and were surprised the FCC was required to go through what it did to prove the initial determination was correct. It is pitiful that an organization should fear LPFM because their members feel they are so inadequate in their bond with listeners and advertisers that LPFM could hurt them.

XIII LOCAL PROGRAMMING

While I abhor the idea of a LPFM station carrying Calvary Chapel's Satellite service or The 7th Day Adventist's LifeTalk Satellite

service around the clock, I would likewise detest the LPFM that ran the weather forecast around the clock as well. I see LPFM as a radio service of local origin.

Although I greatly prefer as much truly local programming as possible, I feel any additional requirements of financially-strapped LPFMs would hinder instead of help LPFM. I think the FCC must trust those it licenses as being dedicated to providing as much local service as possible. Thus, I do not agree with more definition being given for what 'local' programming is.

XIV WINDOWS, COMMUNICATION, etc.

I know the FCC does a dollar's worth of work on a dime. I know the workload is mind boggling. I expect the FCC to be overworked, understaffed and diligent in all it does. This takes time. I understand this. Still, I feel a dedicated LPFM branch should be able to have a website publicized calendar when applications, major and minor changes, etc. are allowed. Windows should be longer to eliminate the haste of a 5 day rush to get an application in. How about 30 days? Is it crazy to expect a filing window for new LPFMs every 2 years? Is it crazy to open major changes windows annually and minor changes a couple of times a year?

Communication is essential. I hear of applicants wondering for 4 years if their application was still being considered. A quick postcard spit out by the computer could show the application accepted for filing (perhaps an automated email would suffice). As the process continues, every 6 months to a year, an update postcard could be sent (and an email). This is essential to keep the organization's spirits up and to keep the community excited about the station.

I have been told of an organization that applied for a LPFM, raised some money, but never heard what happened to their application. The result was the community thought the organization made up the idea of a radio station to milk money from the community, the board members became disenchanted with the

idea and the no news is good news approach pretty much bought the organization a coffin for it's radio station. A couple of years later when the CP arrived, the group had to scrimp and save to get the station up and two years of bitterness between community and organization raised it's head again. The grapevine determined the organization was going to be sued so they decided to go ahead with the radio station instead of giving the money they initially raised back to those who gave. This is what happens when there is no communication.

HOW I ARRIVED AT THESE THOUGHTS AND SUGGESTIONS

As I had stated, I want my organization to be an applicant in a future LPFM window. Before that time comes, I have been determined to develop relationships with LPFM stations most like the situation I shall be in with my organization.

On this year's vacation, I visited a number of distant LPFM stations, spending a day with each. I visited several more rural LPFM stations in Oregon, stations in Washington, California and New Mexico. In addition I have had extensive contact with stations in Georgia, Florida, Indiana, New York and North Carolina. From my phone calls and actual visits, I have gained insight in to the day-to-day operation of the Low Power FM, their needs, concerns and desires. I have been afforded the opportunity to learn the character of the operator.

I can gladly say that the Operators of these stations are of exceptional character and integrity. I can vouch for their desire to play by the rules and I can vouch for their heartfelt desire to serve their communities.

I uncovered their many problems. One station suffers in a community lacking community pride. Their monthly income is only \$150.00 and supplemented by bake sales and other fundraisers to pay the bills. The fact all the operators hold fulltime jobs, the station is far from the vision the operators have of the station with virtually no way to reach these noble goals. A general apathy occurs in this community and a feeling that nothing good

can come from the town. These few are trying to change that. They need options only you can offer in order to mold themselves to the community.

Another station's operator digs in to his pocket to pay the expenses since his revenue is only about 65% of his expenses. Fortunately, he runs his station from his business that also serves as his residence. As things slow down in the afternoon, he takes to the airwaves with the news items he has managed to round up between customers. His aspirations are much, much greater than this. He sees his station with tons of potential but able to do little at the moment. He has had to take time from the station to dream up events to make up the difference when he can't kick in the 35%.

Big dreams and noble causes reflect the mindset of another station. The idea of news reflected by all political bents and presented for listeners to determine where they stand is a goal. Local school news, community news, input from local clubs, non-profits, Churches and every other facet of community are a part of his vision. Yet with only \$90 a month in revenue, he is lucky to be working the station from his home until he can elevate it to the point it can afford a production studio and non-residential location. A move of the tower to a positive height above average terrain is in the plans when the station can afford it. Meanwhile 3 or 4 individuals do local shows and some unduplicated national programs sprinkle his mostly music format that boasts about 250 dedicated listeners. With the hills, his power level is not adequate and rumblings from the business community indicate their dollars are better spent on the local AM station or local weekly newspaper. If he can ever get enough revenue to realize his goals, you'd be proud you issued him a license.

Another station lacks additional funding from it's entity who says "sink or swim". The dedicated, community-oriented operator doesn't have the surplus income to elevate the station upward to the level of service desired. They do pretty well and the operator is retired, so he has the time. The problem is having just enough money to pay the monthly expenses but none for the

hoped for production studio or better programming. It hobbles along with a daily local news and weather report aired hourly, lots of music, the City Council meetings taped for later broadcast and a handful of underwriters. If he had 250 watts, he could reach the nearby communities that remain unserved by media. His financial potential would triple.

Yet another operator uses a 6 CD player to operate around the clock. Lacking the funding, he records his local and regional music mix on to CDs complete with Legal IDs. He is involved in the community and has done much to serve his area after the last local station decided to target a larger town. Unfortunately he cannot run his community-oriented programs live, such as the debate among local political candidates, because of a lack of funding, so he does the next best thing, record it for later broadcast.

Even in one very exceptional community, a low power FM needs more financial support. The community rallied for the \$30,000 needed to begin the station. They rallied when a much needed store shut down the community opened a cooperative store manned by volunteers. Even with a community that works together and understands how it mus